



The National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses (NAON) recognizes that individual units have distinguished themselves to be a pillar of excellence in orthopaedic nursing. This is measured by patient outcomes, staff satisfaction, interdisciplinary communication and teamwork, low staff turnover, and national recognition (for example, Magnet, Disease Specific Certification). This award also recognizes those units with specialty nursing certification, particularly orthopaedic nursing certification. Orthopaedic Nurse Certified (ONC).

NAON developed the ONE Award (Orthopaedic Nursing Excellence) to applaud those units that meet the defined criteria as stated in this guidebook. The following categories are scored based on the information supplied in the application:

1. Staff satisfaction and retention
2. Staff certification (Orthopaedic Nurse certified - ONC or other)
3. Staff ratio to patients
4. Leadership and learning opportunities
5. Positive patient outcome measures
6. Participation in national quality initiatives
7. Collaboration and supportive work environment
8. Outside recognition

Application Process

- One application per unit will be accepted. A unit is defined as the area where the principle nursing care is received
- NAON membership is not required
- Application deadline is Friday, January 30, 2026.
- Awards will be announced at NAON's annual Congress.
- The ONE award is a three year award.
- The application will be blindly reviewed and scored by the panel.
 - Applications will be accepted on the ONE Award Application form only. This is available from <https://www.orthonurse.org/About/Awards>
 - This is a professional document; please use proper grammar, punctuation and avoid using acronyms and abbreviations

- Each category must be completed in its entirety with the appropriate documentation.
- Additionally, the following data is requested of your hospital and unit. This information will be held in strictest confidence.
 - Number of total beds at the facility
 - Number of beds on the unit
 - Number of operating rooms
 - Is the hospital Magnet designated
 - Does the hospital hold Disease Specific Certification/Ortho specialty certification? Please note whether it is basic or advanced and through which certifying body
 - Staffing ratios for each shift
 - How many nurses are certified? List the certification (# of nurses with Orthopaedic Nurse Certified ONC, CMSRN, etc)
 - What is the primary patient population?

Submission

The online submission process is final. Please note that changes, additions, deletions will not be allowed once the application is submitted.

The application form is available from NAON's website at

<https://www.orthonurse.org/About/Awards>

The fee is \$1000 payable to NAON along with the application via credit card. Checks are allowed and must be received prior to the application being processed.

Scoring

Once the application is received by NAON staff, it is assigned to a review panel of orthopaedic nurses. If available, there may be a physician and/or physical therapist on the panel. The scoring from all reviewers will determine eligibility for the award. Applications are blinded to the reviewers. Those units receiving the award will be recognized via NAON's website, ONJ (Orthopaedic Nursing Journal), annual Congress announcement and other social media.

The panel will evaluate the application and prepare feedback based on information provided by the applicant(s). The score is based on process and results. A score is given for each of the categories

- **Nursing Leadership**
- **Professional Development**
- **Commitment to Excellence**
- **Knowledge and Competency**

Process refers to the unit's implementation to address each question. Reviewers will score based on the following factors –

Approach – Describes how the unit considered the factors/situations in each question. When describing the approach, keep in mind the policies, procedures and process improvements your unit developed. Describe the effectiveness of the method chosen. Is the approach systematic and measurable?

Application – Describes how the approach was implemented. Was it consistent and in use by all the stakeholders? Did the application have to be modified?

Learning – Describes how the process was evaluated and what was the result? Were there cycles of change after evaluation? Were best practices followed? Did the process result in other areas being involved?

Results refer to the outcomes achieved by the unit. Reviewers will evaluate results responses considering these factors –

Levels – Refers to the performance in your patient population. For example the number of patients with a related readmission within 30 days per reporting period.

Trends – Refers to the positive or negative change based on the outcome measure reported. Can the result be sustained?

Comparisons – Refers to other areas of benchmarking whether in your hospital, or geographically (national, regional, etc.).

Be the ONE

Before you begin the application it will help you to follow these steps:

1. Read through the entire booklet. It will provide you with the process and scoring tools that will be utilized.
2. Scoring Guidelines are utilized by the panel when evaluating your application.

3. Prepare your unit profile first. This profile describes your unit and its functions, as well as challenges. This should be developed collaboratively with staff and leaders. It is not scored; however, must be completed with the application.
4. Write your application – Review the questions and prepare your responses. Have your application proofread by others for grammar, spelling and content.
 - a. The application is confidential and blinded to the panel of judges.
 - b. Ensure all additional pages including graphics are appropriately labeled.
5. Submit your application
 - a. The person who logs onto the website and submits the application will be the primary contact and will receive the result.
 - b. Please be sure the application is submitted in its entirety as additions and deletions will not be permitted once it is received.